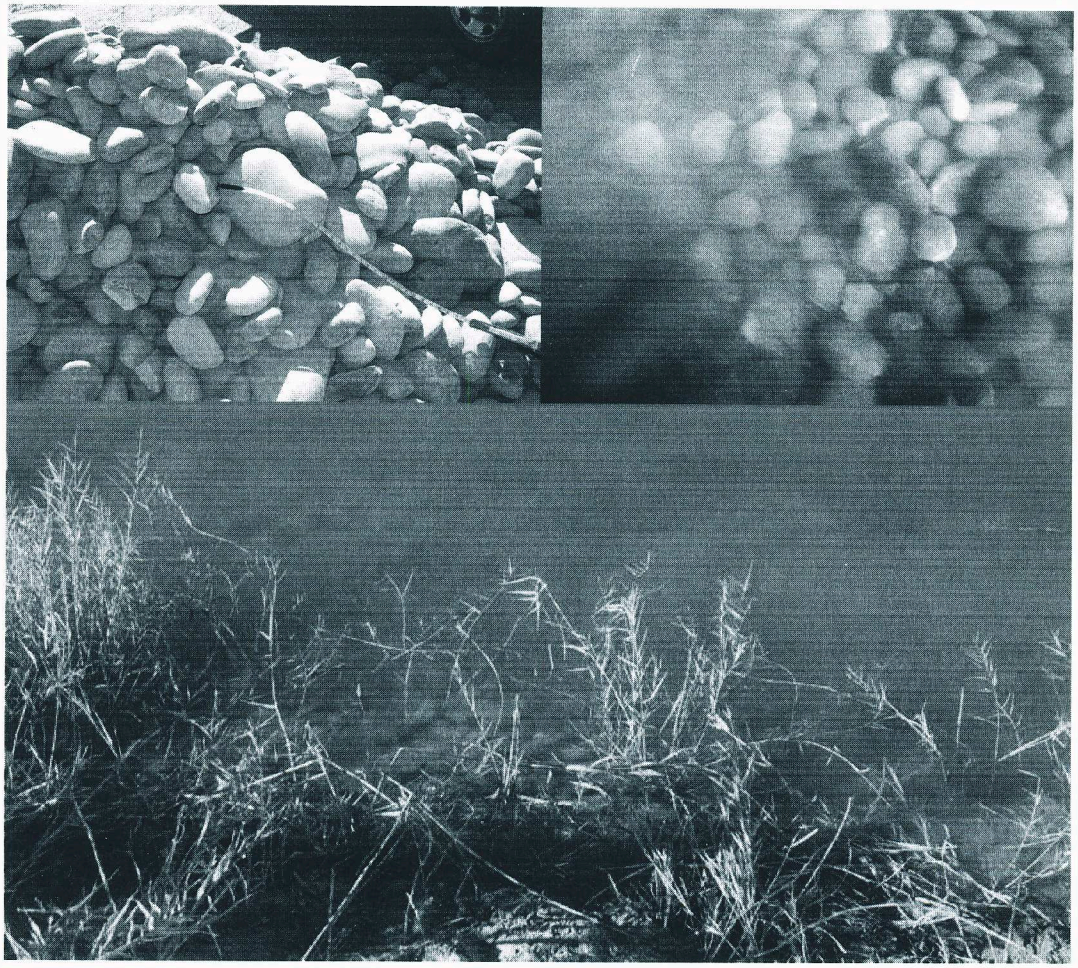
Imperial Ponds February 2009 Report

Two sampling trips to Imperial Ponds were conducted in February by Guillermo Ley and Michael Fell (Native Fish Lab, Marsh & Associates LLC). An additional overnight trip was made to the ponds to add a cobble spawning bed in Pond 6. Remote PIT scanners were deployed in ponds 2, 4, and 6 to obtain data for mark-recapture population estimates and to determine habitat use. Hoop netting was carried out in Pond 4. An attempt was made to collect larvae in all ponds stocked with razorback sucker. Snorkeling was conducted during both trips in Pond 2. Finally, water physico-chemistry parameters were measured in ponds 2-6. Readings were not taken in Pond 1 due to ongoing remediation efforts (pond dewatering).

On February 3, 12 tons of cobble was delivered from Yuma (Valley Sand & Gravel) for the creation of a spawning bed in Pond 6. The cobble ordered was 3 to 8 in. diameter, but most of the rock delivered was closer to 6 to 12 in. diameter. Metal t-posts were driven into the substrate to mark the corners of the approximately 10 x 20 ft spawning bed. The distance was measured with a measuring tape, and GPS coordinates for each corner were recorded. Heavy equipment was used to place the cobble on the bank in line with the spawning bed location. Before the rock was put in the pond about ½ ton of 3-6 in. cobble was removed from the rock pile and set aside. The large cobble (6-12 in rock) was tossed into the staked area from shore. Cobble placement and depth were checked periodically by a swimmer during placement. The spawning bed was extended toward shore outside of the marked area when it was determined there was ample depth of cobble within the 10 X 20 ft area. Once the large cobble was in place, the 3-6 in. cobble was bucketed onto the spawning bed as a veneer over the larger substrate. More detailed information on spawning bed location and design can be provided upon request.